

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 - 11 are pending. Claims 1 – 11 have been rejected. Claims 1-5, 7-8 and 10-11 have been amended. Claims 6 and 9 have been cancelled. As set forth more fully below, reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejections of the claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-8 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over McGuire (US Patent No. 6,054,691) in view of Burns (US Patent No. 3,519,023) on the grounds that McGuire discloses an electric heater having all the features of the claimed invention but for the collars and the thermostat. Burns discloses a defrosting collar having collars and a thermostat. The Examiner has also stated that claims 9-11 are objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claims 6 and 9. None of the cited references alone or in combination teach or suggest a heating collar having a protective layer with a fastening means, as is evident by the Examiner's allowance of claim 9.

Other Amendments

Claims 2-5, 7-8, and 11 have been amended so that the preambles all conform to claim 1. Further, claims 2 – 5 have been amended to clarify that the claims refer to a heating collar; and claims 7-8, to clarify that the claims refer to the thermostatic control

mechanism. Finally, claims 7 and 10 have been amended to change the dependency to a pending claim.

Conclusion

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that all the pending claims are in a condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-4650. A duplicate copy of this form is enclosed.

If in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at 410-923-2660.

Respectfully submitted,

/wjbundren/

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